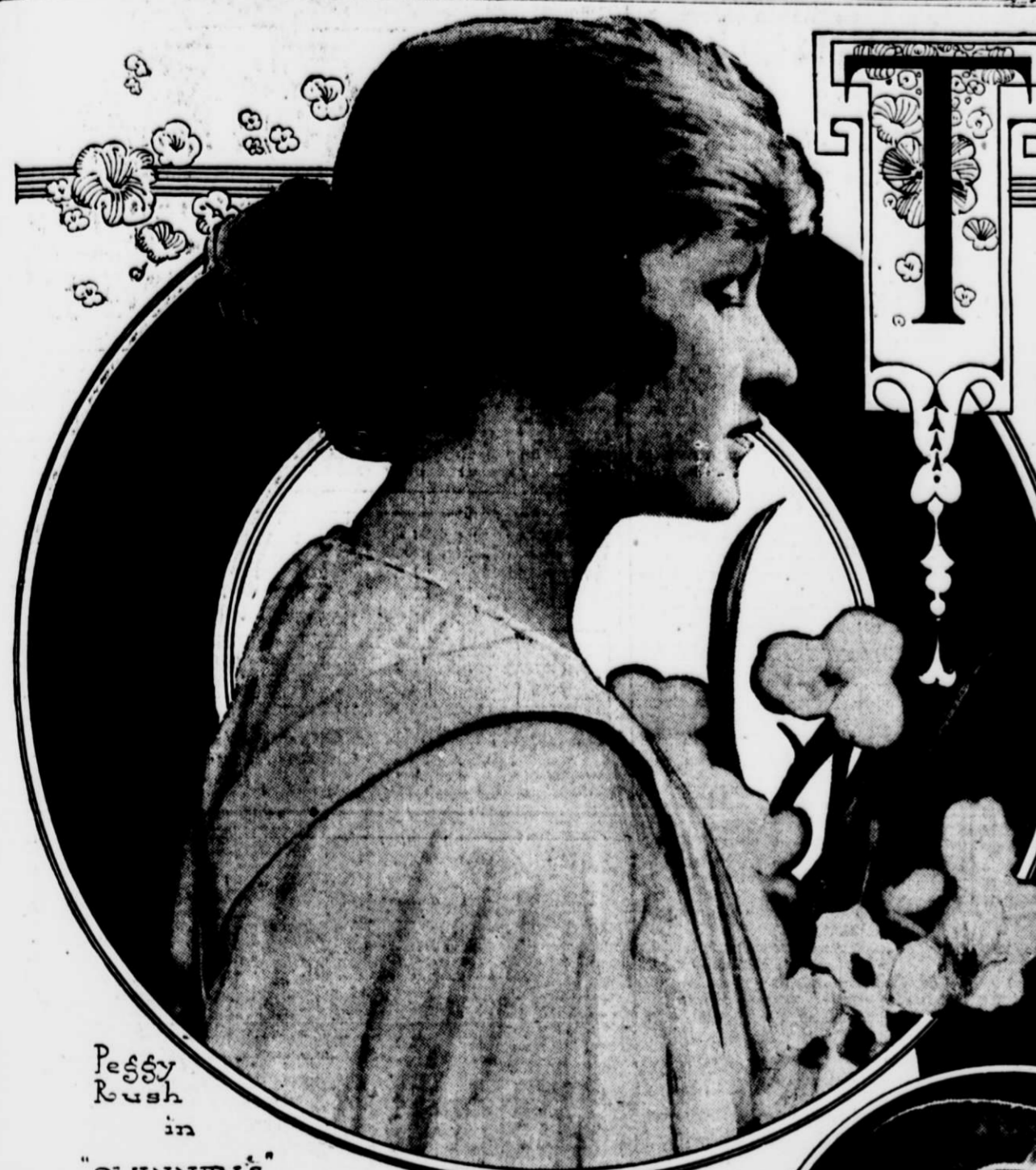


THE WEEK at the PLAY



Peggy Rush

"QUINNEY'S"



Ethel Barrymore
in
"OUR MRS. MCCHESNEY"



Evelyn Nesbit at the BALANCE THEATRE



Leonore Ulrich
in "THE MARK OF THE BEAST"

THE NEW PLAYS OF THE PRESENT WEEK.

Novelties From This Country and From Europe.
MONDAY—Maxine Elliott's Theatre—"Quinneys," imported comedy drama played by English actors.
TUESDAY—Lyceum Theatre—"Our Mrs. McChesney," farce for Ethel Barrymore, made from Edna Ferber's "Roast Beef Medium."
WEDNESDAY—The Princess Theatre—"The Mark of the Beast," with George Nash in the leading role.
THURSDAY—Lyric Theatre—"Abe and Mawruss," Continuation of "Potash & Perlmutter," by the same author and R. C. Megrue.

revelation of every point of meaning in the author's lines. Such sensitive and intelligent acting expressed by such artistic and modern methods is encouraging to all who are interested in the high artistic standard of the American stage.

Charles B. Dillingham has accomplished wonders—one is tempted to

say the impossible—at the Hippodrome and found a way of imparting novelty to the performances at that institution which has started it on a new course of life. And it was that which seemed to be the impossible thing. It looked as if the institution had come to a natural end. Certainly resurrection by means of the old form of spectacle would have been impos-

sible. So the idea of putting into the theatre a glorified and sublimated musical comedy was a stroke of managerial genius which Mr. Dillingham planned and Mr. Burnside put into practical form.

And the popular success is immense. In the worst theatre year known in a decade—that is, the worst up to the present time—there is not a seat to be

had. Mr. Dillingham still sits with a pair of opera glasses in hand to look at the stage with the same solitude that Gen. Joffre might show at the front trying to discover some detail in which improvement might be possible. But it seems as if the difficult problem of giving the public what it wants had been most satisfactorily solved at the Hippodrome.

NOVELTIES THAT THE THEATRE MANAGERS PROMISE

The outlook for the coming week is as lively as if it were the beginning of the season. It happens, however, that only one of the four theatres which will have new plays this week is opening for the first time. This is the little Princess Theatre. The others have all had at least one chance this year.

The Shuberts will present at the Maxine Elliott Theatre to-morrow night with the English company which Frederick Harrison has brought to this country "Quinneys," a new comedy by Horace Vachell, which has had a long run in England. In the company are Frederick Ross, Margaret Watson, Peggy Rush, Arthur Grenville, Cathleen Nesbitt, Cecil Fletcher, Herbert Evans and Cyril Griffiths.

Ethel Barrymore's annual New York engagement will be played this season at the Lyceum Theatre, commencing next Tuesday night, the piece being "Our Mrs. McChesney," a new American comedy, made out of the Edna Ferber McChesney stories, by George V. Hobart and Edna Ferber. "Our Mrs. McChesney" is in three acts, which subdivide into five scenes. Miss Barrymore is a travelling saleswoman in "Our Mrs. McChesney."

The career lived by the character in the play is made out of the many Edna Ferber stories. Given the right of light comedy. The action of the piece extends from Sandusky, Ohio, to a Riverside Drive apartment. There are over thirty speaking parts in "Our Mrs. McChesney."

The Shuberts will present George Nash in a new three act play entitled "The Mark of the Beast," by Georgia Carle and Fanny Cannon, on Wednesday at the Princess Theatre. Mr. Nash was seen last season in "The Three Hearts."

The Standard Theatre is going to bring Cyril Maude in "Grumpy" back to New York at bargain rates, and there can be little doubt that he will be appreciated. Even at the Empire Theatre, where Mr. Maude in this interesting play was received as cordially by the public as he had been two years ago at Wallack's Theatre, the houses were so large as to almost break the record for a revival. So the Standard seems to have a good week ahead of it.

The Lexington Theatre will this week be the site of those "Twin Bees" which have been moving about from one neighborhood theatre to another for the past month. They may be transported to a more remote point after this week, and all those who desire to inspect these two attractive pieces of bedroom furniture should not waste time.

Two actors once in vaudeville are Paul Nicholson and Miss Norton, who now lead the cast of "A Pair of Sixes," which is to be seen at the York Theatre this week. They are well fitted to the brightly colored of Edward Peple's play, which has developed great vitality for a farce. It bears up well.

The Irving Place Theatre will present on Wednesday night a new and successful play by Karl Schoenherr called "Der Weibsteufel," which has created a sensation in Germany.

Beginning Monday night, Masters' "Interior" will be given on the programme, taking the place of Braccio's "A Night of Snow." The reason given for the change in the bill is that the Italian play is foreign to the understanding and sympathy of an American audience. Also there have been many requests for a revival of "Interior." In it will appear Josephine A. Meyer, Florence Enright.

A PLAY A WEEK HERE.

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A WOMAN'S THEATRE.

Grace George and Her Plans at the Playhouse for the Year.

"The condition that finally decided me upon my present season at the Playhouse," said Grace George to a SUN reporter, "was despair—after despair induced by the impossibility of finding a suitable new play. I had given practically all my time to reading manuscripts and novels for two or three years, without finding a single story that held out the slightest hope. There are new plays which are attractive from some particular angle, but apparently there are none which fill all the requirements of an actress striving to present nothing but really good plays from every point of consideration. It is this I do not mean what is termed the highbrow drama, but well written, skilfully constructed, thoroughly interesting plays—clean, of course."

"I picture yourself feeling the vital necessity for realizing a certain thing which you realize more and more keenly does not exist, and you will perceive the state of mind in which I began to find myself. Was I in reality laid upon the shelf through lack of material? Had my career come to a premature end because no good new play was to be had?"

"It was while I was considering this prospect that some of the motion picture magazines fairly took my breath away with fabulous offers to enter the screen drama field. To those I paid no attention for some time, but the propositions were persistent, and I finally began to ask myself why not, since in spite of unceasing diligence the doors of the legitimate theatre seemed closed to me."

"So I went to a studio of the first class and scrutinized it and what the directors were doing, and I about made up my mind that the picture business was not for me. If this was the screen idea of dramatic art, I could

not bring myself to concede. Then, thinking that possibly my advance view of the camera drama might have prejudiced my judgment, I visited another studio whose output is favorably and widely known. This time I was surely open to conviction, but the result was the same.

"The dilemma was becoming a greater and greater source of distraction the more I endeavored to find a way out. Finally one day Mr. Brady asked me a very simple question. He said, 'If you can't get good new plays, why not get some good old ones?'

"That brought us around to the idea we had cherished ever since the Playhouse was decided upon, but which for business reasons we had never put in execution. At first I was averse to it. I did not think the time was ripe. Moreover, I did not believe the American public was favorably disposed toward revivals."

"But when I saw the throngs that gave their really ardent support to 'Diplomacy,' 'Tribby' and 'A Celebrated Case' I was quite willing to revise my judgment. And when reminded of my own success in 'The Truth' under Winthrop Ames's direction, I capitulated entirely."

"Then came the question of what plays to select—the most important question of all. The first one discussed was 'The New York Idea,' and from the thought of this I retreated immediately. From my very content days I had immensely admired Mrs. Fiske's original impersonation of *Anthony Karslake*. She has always been and still is my ideal actress. To me her art is perfection itself. I was, to tell the plain truth, terribly afraid of meeting the ordeal of comparison, and how I ever allowed myself to be talked into it I do not know."

"But nobody so far has been so inconsiderate as to draw this line, and 'The New York Idea,' I am very happy to say, is extremely successful. From the time this comedy was selected to head the Playhouse list the plans for the season took on the process of development, and it was decided that I was to have free reign in everything. In fact, the entire burden of direction should rest upon me. It has been a big burden, but not a heavy one, for

it has reassured an ambition which I was beginning to fear was in imminent danger of being crushed out of me.

"So that, while the work of acting and directing is very hard work, calling for the exercise of every faculty and involving long hours of close application day and evening, it is work that I love, and it is bringing about results which are satisfying to me and, I believe, of genuine value to the stage."

"It may be of interest to know that I have no intention of playing all the principal feminine roles during the Playhouse season. What I am striving for is a general result in which

ON THE LOOKS OF POETS

E. H. Sothern does not think that stage types should be dominating in all productions. He does not regard as just, therefore, the criticism of his fat and businesslike poet in "The Two Virtues."

"There is nothing so absurd," said Mr. Sothern last night in his dressing room, "as a stage tradition. Neither in heaven nor on earth nor under the earth was there ever anything like the conventional stage poet. He never existed in actual life. He is the reflection, doubtless, of the comic poet of the funny paper. I doubt if anybody ever saw a thin, gaunt, slopshy poet. Even I have written poetry. I once published a book of verses, and look at me!"

"So it is that when I came to cast *Claude Lorraine*, the pseudo poet of Mr. Sothern's comedy, I selected in Orlando Daly a type that exactly suited my notion at least of what a poet should and would look like, and yet gaze at some of the criticisms of the play. One aesthetic policeman of the drama said: 'One of the most curious things about the performance was the casting of a stout comedian, Orlando Daly, in the role of a poet.' Another overlord of the playhouse said: 'Does Orlando Daly imagine that it is theatrically or economically correct to dress and portray a poet as if he were a buxant habitude of the most fashionable part of Bond Street and its tailors?'

"Look here," continued Mr. Sothern, "one of my critic friends says: 'Mr. Sothern's poet looked like a well-fed business man.' Now please have a look at this in the biography of Robert Browning: 'Mr. Browning, ample of earth, was often mistaken for a prosperous business man.'"

"Here we have revealed the fact that the Cicerones of the drama have had no acquaintance with poets dead or alive, that all they know about poets are their caricatures in farce comedy and the libelous pictures they have seen of them in *Life*, *Puck* or *Judge*."

"From the criticisms it will be seen that our play samplers consider that to write poetry it is essential that a man should be a tattered-madman in dress and of starved-gaunt emaciated, sickly appearance. As to sartorial effects, where except on the stage did one ever see a poet dressed like a rag-picker? Not, surely, in real life."

"Take the poets of any age and you will find that they have been exquisite dandies. As to the pictures of poets, Sir Philip Sidney, Sir Walter Raleigh, Richard Lovelace and the headroll of poets of the Elizabethan era and during the Restoration? Have a look at them. You will discover that they were encased, encrusted, enveloped in lace, silks, velvets, jewels and all manner of lovely personal embellishments. To our critic friends imagine that these poets were unknown to the Bond Street of their time, that they were not seen at court and on state occasions?"

"Then there was Samuel Rogers, the banker poet, a friend of all the important people of his time. He was as careful in his dress as a modern lady preparing herself for the opera. The time was never present when those possessing the poetic faculty were a dirty and ill kept crew."

"Poets have a good reason for being naturally so sartorially splendid. The starved rhymer with ragged clothes never existed in real life. He is merely the creation of the dramatists and the comic artists. Look about you in our own time and where will you find a stage poet in real life. Almost all renowned poets have been eminent dandies. The greatest poet of Italy is Gabriel d'Annunzio. He is the best dressed man in Italy. Cast your eye at France. The matchless dandy of the Parisian boulevard is a poet—Edmond Rostand."

"English poets, as I have instanced

plays will be produced so as to bring out their best qualities and to intend to cast myself as well as the other members of my company in parts best calculated to reach this end.

"In some of the plays of the chosen repertoire I shall play characters that are of a markedly minor nature. The conduct of the theatre upon lines such as those mentioned ought to have the first effect of making good representations of our plays, and second of improving the art of all the players participating in them. I am glad to be able to say that there is a very general and very laudable desire to this effect among my company associates. We all feel that we have taken a very long step toward our goal, and the public is showing us by its extremely liberal patronage that we are moving in a direction that meets the highest approval."

THE PLAYS THAT LAST.

The plays that continue in New York are "Our Mrs. McChesney" at the Lyceum Theatre, "The Two Virtues" at the Booth Theatre, "Sherlock Holmes" at the Empire Theatre, "Abe and Mawruss" at the Shubert Theatre, "The Boomerang" at the Belasco Theatre, "Common Clay" at the Republic Theatre, "Young America" at the Gaiety Theatre, "Under Fire" at the Hudson Theatre, "The New York Idea" at the Playhouse, "The Bargain" at the Comedy Theatre, "Rolling Stones" at the Harris Theatre, "Miss Information" at the Cohan Theatre, "Hit-the-Trail-Holiday" at the Astor Theatre, "Quinneys" at the Maxine Elliott Theatre and "Somebody" at the Fulton Theatre.

The musical plays are "Chin Chin" at the Globe Theatre, "The Girl Who Smiles" at the Longacre Theatre, "The Blue Paradise" at the Casino Theatre, Ned Wayburn's "Town Topics" at the Century Theatre and "A World of Pleasure" at the Winter Garden.

The Hippodrome is now open with Sousa's Band, "Hip-Hip-Hooray" and "Flirting at St. M. Rita," a big spectacular offering.

In the case of Elizabethan, have all been particular in point of dress. Have you not read the life of Oliver Goldsmith? Surely you have and so you know that poor Oliver laid out so much money with his tailor that he came very near starving to death. It is only a little while ago that England sent us a poet whose personal embellishments were so startling that it was necessary to call out the reserves to beat off the crowds. I refer to Richard Le Gallienne.

"Then what about Oscar Wilde? Were the glories of the fields and the hothouses comparable to his elegance of clothes? Why, the poets of England, not to forget Lord Byron or Richard Brinsley Sheridan, have been mad about clothes. And I have known any number of American poets, all of whom made the blues of the field blush with shame. Mind you, I am talking about poets, not the rhymerists of Brumes Garver of Washington Square."

"Do you remember the late Edmund Clarence Stedman? He was ever most careful in his dress. He never looked the least like a rhymer. I recall portraits of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Oliver Wendell Holmes, John Greenleaf Whittier, Bayard Taylor, William Cullen Bryant, Bret Harte and others. These men, while not exactly dandies, dressed at the top of the mode."

"It might be possible in scanning the portrait galleries of the poets to discover one or more of gaunt aspect, but these mostly were men of ill health, and not men starved by the poetic faculty. As to the studio account, also, that some few of the great English poets died at an early age and so had no opportunity of acquiring Faustian proportions. There is no need to mention Alexander Pope and John Keats, for they were amateurs. The poets who were poets, but not their lungs and liver."

"The greatest poet of France was of ample girth. I refer to Victor Hugo. Guy de Maupassant was a great feeder and gained a great redundancy of person. Daudet and Goncourt—both corpulent and both dandies."

"The first great poet of England was a fat man—Dan Chaucer. I once had a play with Chaucer as the central character and the author insisted that I dress like old Falstaff. Shakespeare too was a tubby person. Have you seen his bust of course you have—in the church at Stratford-upon-Avon? His friend, Ben Jonson, too, was of gargantuan proportions. Another of England's great poets, Thomas Otway, was notorious for his mountainous appearance. Otway once appeared in one of his own plays and he was so awkwardly that he was obliged to leave the stage. Jonathan Swift, Samuel Butler, Oliver Goldsmith, Dr. Johnson were all hefty parties. William Morris, Daniel Gabriel Rossetti and Oscar Wilde—alright round! But there must have been something seriously the matter with Shakespeare! And William Butler Yeats!"

"The present day laureate of England, Robert Bridges, is none of your sickly emaciated persons, but a spreading fellow. Do you recall William Watson, who has made frequent visits to this country? He is twice the size of Orlando Daly."

"But let's harken back to Byron. He became a pudgy, waddy person a mountain of fat. Byron was so disturbed about his waddy line that he took to drinking wine in order to reduce it. Then, of course, Taylor Coleridge. He became a mountain of flesh. Why, one of the greatest literary men and poets of our time is the fattest man in England, the same being Gilbert K. Chesterton."

"We haven't had one prominent poet who was the gaunt skeleton of the poets' and the critics' of the poets. Have you seen Longfellow's statue in his home in Portland, Me.? Have you seen portraits of Bayard Taylor, James Russell Lowell, Thomas Bailey Aldrich and James Watson's? They were all fat men. In his town today, why the best poet in his town today was a fat man, a man of ample proportions, a regular well-fed man. I refer to Tom Marston of THE EVENING SUN."

"So you will see that all this talk about rhymer poets and poets who are sickly emaciated is the exact reverse of the truth. I do not care to map about stage traditions."